(c) if so, whether the damage caused was actually not covered under the warranty; and

(d) what is the present status of the said vehicle stating whether it is in good working condition or it required further repairs?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI JAYANATHI NATARAJAN): (a) The Department of Ocean Development (DOD) spent Rs. 112.30 lakhs for procuring Polar Bear-II vehicle for operation in Antarctica. This vehicle was taken delivery ex-works (USA) in good condition by the authorised shipping agent of the Ministry of Surface Transport on behalf of DOD. During trans-shipment from USA to South Africa for onward shipment to Antarctica, the vehicle suffered minor damages such as 'crack on the front left glass, a crumple in left cabin door with side mirror bracket set back, left door vertical and top horizontal handrails scratched, left door access ladder set-in, left side engine compartment set-in and engine hatched distorted, front fender scratched, left control penel bulged out" This has been certified at South Africa by (a) Independent Marine Surveyor, (b) the Master of the Russian Ship 'Mikhail Somov' and (c) M/s Combine Ocean, the handling agent at Cape Town. These damages were cosmetic in nature and had not impaired the actual working of the vechicle. In fact, on reaching Antarctica, the vehicle was certified serviceable by the station commander and thereafter deployed with payload of 20 KL fuel tank, on a trailor in the first convoy from Shelf to the Indian station 'Maitri'. After covering about 70 km of the convoy route the vehicle broke down due to main axle failure which is attributed to sudden overload/drop of the vehicle.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) As the cause of the damage was due to 'dynamic overload followed by mechanical failure' the same is not covered under warranty.

(d) The vehicle requires repairs.

Right to Information

1036. SHRI NARENDRA MOHAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are thinking of empowering all the citizens to seek information on the functioning of all public authorities in the country;

(b) if so, whether the existing policy of Government regarding classification of documents will not come in the way;

(c) what would be the modalities for seeking such an information by a common man; and

(d) whether there will be quick remedial measures in case such an information is refused?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN): (a) to (d) with a view to introduce greater transparency and openness in functioning of Government and public bodies, the Government had constituted a Working Group on "Right to Information and Promotion of Open and Transparent Government" under the Chairmanship of Shri H. D. Shourie. The Working Group has submitted its report to the Government on the 21st May, 1997. It has prepared for consideration of the Government a draft "Freedom of Information Bill". In order to ensure that flow of information to the public is not impended by other laws and rules, the Group has recommended amendments to section 5 of the Official Secrets Act, 1923, Sections 123 and 124 of the Indian Evidence Act, 1872 together with consequential amendments in the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908 and in the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973, Rule 11 of the CCS (Conduct) Rules, 1964 and the

Manual of Departmental Security Instructions relating to classification of information. The "Freedom of Information Bill" also contains modalities for seeking information as also remedial measures in cases where access to information is refused.

The Report of the Working Group has been forwarded to the various Central Ministries/Departments and the State Governments/Union Territories administrations seeking their views/ comments on the recommendations. The Ministries/Departments administering the aforesaid Acts and other provisions have been separately requested to initiate action in respect of these recommendations.

Autonomy to CBI

1037. SHRI SANJAY DALMIA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to give overall autonomy to CBI;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN): (a) and (c) The Central Bureau of Investigation derives its powers from the Delhi Special Police Establishment Act, 1946 and enjoys full functional autonomy.

Bringing Employees of Navodaya Vidyalayas and Kendriya Vidjyalayas under CAT

1038. SHRI GOVINDRAM MIRI:
SHRI SHIV CHARAN SINGH:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have since decided to issue notification announcing inclusion of employees of Kendriya Vidyalayas and Navodaya Vidyalayas under the jurisdiction of Central Administrative Tribunal;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN); (a) to (c) The Question of bringing the employees of Kendriya Vidyalayas and Navodaya Vidyalayas and some other organisations under the jurisdiction of Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT) is dependent on the assessment of additional workload as a result thereof on the CAT for which the concerned organisations have yet to supply some additional information.

सम्पन्न वर्ग (क्रीमी लेयर) को अन्य पिछड़ा वर्ग (ओ०बी०सी०) जैसी सुविधाएं न दिया जाना

1039. **श्री शिव चरण सिंह:** क्या प्रधान मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या यह सच है कि प्रशासनिक सेवाओं की परीक्षा में सम्पन्न वर्ग (क्रीमी लेयर) के अभ्यर्थियों को अन्य पिछड़े वर्गों को उपलब्ध सुविधाएं नहीं मिलती हैं;

(ख) यदि हां, तो क्या आवेदन की अंतिम तिथि के बाद और/या प्रतियोगिता-परीक्षा तिथि के बाद सम्पन्न-वर्ग के अंतर्गत आने वाले अन्य पिछड़े वर्गों के अभ्यर्थी परिणाम अनुकूल होने पर भी कोटा-नियुक्ति से वंचित कर दिए जाते हैं; जैसा कि हाल ही में राजस्थान प्रशासनिक सेवा परीक्षाओं के संदर्भ में हुआ है; और

(ग) यदि हां, तो इसका औचित्य क्या है?

नागर विमानन मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री तथा संसदीय कार्य मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्रीमती जयन्ती नटराजन): (क) जी, हां।

(ख) केन्द्र सरकार ने इस आशय के ऐसे कोई आदेश जारी नहीं किए हैं कि जिससे अन्य पिछड़े वर्गों के ऐसे उम्मीदवारों को, जो "सम्पन्न वर्ग" (क्रीमी लेयर) के अंतर्गत आते हैं, आवेदन की अंतिम तारीख और/अथवा प्रतियोगी परीक्षा की तारीख के पश्चात्